

# STEM Regional Boards Mega-Meeting

September 12, 2014



## Regional Board Chairs Share-Out: Innovations at the Regional Level

Each Iowa STEM Regional Board Chair was invited to share a few highlights on innovations occurring at their regional board level, as well as great news from their region.

### Southwest Iowa STEM Region:

- New office location in Red Oak
- 4 new Board members with lots of energy

### South Central STEM Region:

- Developing Professional Development with William Penn to offer STEM PD continuing education (open to all teachers)
- Women in Math in Computer Science program through Drake; Taking out to different groups throughout the communities in the region
- Drake University – now has STEM Endorsement program

### Southeast Iowa STEM Region:

- They are setting higher level goals; what is most meaningful for STEM in SE Iowa
- The board has worked to catalog outreach; so that all board members are able to understand and convey a similar message when talking about STEM in their region
- Really trying to reach all underrepresented students, making difference in rural areas – ie...help bus those kids that otherwise would not able to attend STEM events and education opportunities.
- Engaging with meaningful partners – ie. Boys & Girls Club; utilizing current programming to assist these organizations help spread the message.
- Utilizing board members to “go where we know” ie...school board members reach out to their peers
- Moving meetings to different locations to really learn what is going on, asking those where the meeting is at to present on what they are doing relating to STEM.

### Northwest Iowa STEM Region:

- Focus energy on heat map and making sure that the board is covering those areas that are still ‘in need’.

### North Central STEM Region:

- Integrate what scale-ups are doing and what is happening with the programming in the classroom (K-12 approach). This helps in identifying areas of need in the classrooms as a result of this
- Excited to see how scale-up programs are opening doors and making real impact for other opportunities. (ie.,...Hour of Code lead to teacher taking kids to more programming opportunities)
- Moving meetings around allowing opportunities for others to attend and participate (ie..Extension and Defined STEM) to help create systemic opportunities. Also using this opportunity to invite additional external guests to the Board meetings (ie..board meeting held in Forest City with Waldorf faculty invited to attend)

Northeast Iowa STEM Region:

- Also move meetings around, more implementation of scale-up programming
- STEM Festivals – will begin utilizing electronic tracking of who is attending

### **Comprehensive Notes from Table Group Discussions**

The following six questions were presented to six different table groups, comprised of a mix of board members from various regions of the state, representing various capacities of the makeup of the board (ie...extension services/AEA/Economic Development/STEM teacher, etc...)

***How have you been able to advance your organization's STEM by serving on the Board?***

***How has your organization been able to help advance the STEM Council's agenda?***

***How could ties between your organization and Iowa STEM be strengthened?***

***How could Board functions be improved to take full advantage of your interest/skills?***

***What specific role(s) have you played as a Board member?***

***What is one take-away you can share with other Board members across Iowa as to a best practice your board has enacted?***

The following ***Ideas/Solutions to raise our STEM IQ*** resulted from those conversations:

- When teachers are implementing scale-ups, videotape so they and others can see how this is being done, and that resource can be shared.

- Working groups – should Professional Development be added as a working groups? For example – Iowa PD online.
- Board members can do more to go out to the communities to see what is going on in real time, actually see programming in action.
- Have scale-ups share their program information so it can be re-announced by board to interested parties
- Rotation of meeting locations good, have teachers come in and do presentations.
- Long term goals in working with teachers, with all of our programming (ie...STEM classrooms)
- With STEM, needs to come soft skills (communicating with other) and making sure they are part of programming.
- Assessment of board members skill sets and interests – helps form sub-committees and tap into their strengths (skills assessment and strengths finder).
- How do you keep attendance up at the Board meetings? Make sure that each member has a voice and topics that they are interested in (ie..student/teacher panel will present as part of the meeting).
- What kinds of communications occurs between meetings? Utilizing cloud resources to share information, set up Google folder where they can collaborate and share information (ie...scale-up selection had a contact log and helped with accountability).
- Possibility of having virtual meetings opposite of in-person meetings, depending on content.
- Communication – make sure that there is a consistent message being conveyed to whatever group you are talking to.
- For events --- ie..STEM Festivals, keep information fresh. Think about how this can continue to be localized and taken to where your audience is.
- For different stakeholders – make sure that they all understand what STEM is and how it connects to careers.
- Subcommittees are a good thing to form. They give board structure and outline roles/responsibilities according to interest.
- Transition planning is a good thing to think about.
- Continually doing things with purpose. Being strategic about planning of events (festivals). Use a good model that was successful and how can others use this (share your template).
- Great thinking on the part of structure and make-up of composition of the Regional Boards. Great to be able to network with different stakeholders and share/develop new ideas for collaboration.
- Technology – possibly invite technology person to the Board, and how that person can help get networked into outreach.
- Community college and universities – how they can get involved with teacher prep and helping teachers how to teach?

- Continue to clarify roles of both board and their responsibilities through a training manual and handbook.
- Take time to set goals for your board. What is this initiative supposed to look like in so many years? And how can the boards then take this information and use it in their own planning?
- What is the State of the State STEM plan? Objectives of the HUBS should be nested under the state plan.
- Encourage participation of board members to attend other regions meetings.
- Scale-up programming has really enhanced outreach programming of other organizations involved. Branding model discussed today could be used to solidify this.
- Create innovative funding models for more outreach opportunities.
- Possibly get together more frequently, maybe through online resources. Tailor a specific newsletter for the regional boards to share best practices and offer resources.
- Parent outreach and engagement – how can our programming be shared with this group to help promote the programming and get this group involved. (ie...pint size science sending home notes to parents about each module they are working with the kids on).
- Strategic planning of how to fund scale ups --- find more ways to quantify how STEM programming is actually impacting students (ie...program affecting 500 students vs. 50 students).
- Invite other board members to get each other's newsletters.
- Develop a Parent's Night Out: Parent Initiative to get them more engaged.
- More communication about what is happening in other STEM Regions
- Continued development of benchmarks for the Regional Boards, based on the vision/mission of the Council's work.
- Share best practices with board members more frequently (maybe a message board?)
- PD in many formats was a big issue because the feeling from attendees was that the teachers had been teased and now they needed assistance in system building and seeing the bigger picture, especially with regard to connecting to business partners. The consensus of the group was that this could be an initiative and many would be willing to serve on the committee to continue the discussion.